# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

## 1986 ANNUAL REPORT

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May 5, 1987

Honourable Jim Dinning
Minister
Community and Occupational Health
402 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Mr. Dinning:

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Occupational Health and Safety Council, to submit the Annual Report for 1986.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the report with you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

M. C. Shaw

Maureen Shaw, Chairman
Occupational Health and
Safety Council

MS:jm

## I INTRODUCTION - THE EARLY YEARS

The Gale Commission, formed to investigate occupational health and safety matters in Alberta was authorized by Order-in-Council on November 27th, 1973. After many public hearings and a great deal of work, their report was submitted January 31st, 1975.

Part of the Commission's recommendations was:

> "The model we recommend is one which would involve the establishment of a new ministry for occupational safety and health headed by a Minister of the Crown. A separate Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) would also be established to bring together the activities of an occupational safety and health service. The newly created Department would have a centralized inspectorate, along with a research and development, education, occupational health, as well as an administrative capability."

The Occupational Health and Safety Act was proclaimed in 1976 and the Occupational Health and Safety Council was established by Order-in-Council November 23rd, 1976 with 12 members - four from each of the employer, worker and public sectors.

To compare with 1986, the council in its first year of 1977 concentrated on the following matters:

- Learning about its own role including several meetings with the Minister as well as the Assistant Deputy Minister and the three branch directors.
- Review of the Act and Regulations.
- Review of Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee rules - recommended changes as well as separate regulations for the construction industry.
- Appeals - established rules and procedures for hearings. Heard and upheld one appeal.
- Training - spent considerable time discussing training of Occupational Health and Safety Division personnel, especially those involved in Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committees.
- Visited several construction work sites.

## II SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY DIVISION IN 1986

Election - the Minister of Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation for seven years, the Honourable Bill W. Diachuk, was unsuccessful in his bid for re-election. At its May 13th meeting, council expressed its regret at the election results and thanked Mr. Diachuk for his strong support of council. He was also congratulated for his significant contribution to occupational health and safety in Alberta.

New Department - the Department of Social Services and Community Health was split and the Occupational Health and Safety Division became one of the six divisions within Community and Occupational Health.

New Minister - the Honourable Jim Dinning assumed the role of Minister in the new Department of Community and Occupational Health with Dr. Robert Orford as Deputy Minister. Of prime importance to council, Dr. Herb Buchwald continues to head the Occupational Health and Safety Division, as Managing Director. The re-organization of the Department was explained by Mr. Dinning and Dr. Orford at the June 13th, 1986 council meeting.

## III SUBCOMMITTEES

First Aid Subcommittee

- (Chairman John Cowell, Member Tom Whiting)

Basically inactive in 1986 after reviewing regulations starting in 1983 and culminating in its report to council in May 1985. It is now awaiting receipt of new regulation when they are drafted and presented to council for review.

Appeal Rules and Procedures

- (Chairman Maureen Shaw, Vice-Chairman John Cowell, Members Sam Lee and Clint Dunford)

The original procedures were deemed inadequate so a complete re-writing was performed through several drafts and considerable discussion at council meetings. Final draft was approved at the June meeting.

Small Business Subcommittee

- (Chairman Clint Dunford, Members Rita Nyback and Archie Ewaskiw)

This subcommittee was formed in August 1984 to review the services provided by the Occupational Health and Safety Division to small employers and also to determine why these employers had a disproportionately high rate of accidents. Considerable research involving many meetings resulted in a series of recommendations. These were discussed through several drafts and council meetings which resulted in a final report being approved at the December 1986 meeting for submission to the Minister.

## IV APPEALS

Although very few appeals have been heard during the ten-year history of the Occupational Health and Safety Council, two appeals were heard in 1986.

Prospec Chemicals Ltd.

- (Chairman Maureen Shaw, Members Sam Lee and Clint Dunford)

Appealed an order under Section 28 of the Act concerning wrongful dismissal of a worker. The appeal was upheld by the Appeal Division. Several recommendations were made to the Minister from points arising during the appeal process.

Ellis-Don Management Services Ltd.

- (Chairman Maureen Shaw, Members Sam Lee and John Cowell)

Appealed an order under the First Aid Regulation requiring a nurse at a work site with more than 200 workers. The Appeal Division upheld the order and denied the appeal.

A mock appeal was also staged for the edification of the rest of council.

## V MEETINGS

In 1986 the Occupational Health and Safety Council held eight meetings as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| January 23 | (Edmonton) | August 8 | (Calgary) |
| March 25 | (Calgary) | September 26 | (Calgary) |
| May 13 | (Edmonton) | November 6 | (Edmonton) |
| June 13 | (Edmonton) | December 19 | (Calgary) |

The following covers the main items discussed at these meetings:

- Significant Incident Review Board (SIRB) - procedures of this Board explained by Dr. Buchwald.

- AIDS Risk in the Workplace - presentation by Dr. Jonas Kalnas explaining the risks and protective measures.

- Employers Safety Policy vs. Human Rights - George Bryce and Keith Smith explained employers legal responsibilities and how these would normally overrule human rights in court.

- Smoking Policies in the Workplace - there is an increasing resistance of non-smokers to work in premises polluted by smoke.

- Workers' Compensation Board Medical Services - Dr. Dufresne of the WCB explained Medical Services responsiblity in the areas of claims adjudication, medical monitoring, research, pension evaluation and rehabilitation.

- Mines Safety Regulation - concern is being raised by unions about codes of practice and use of performance standards instead of specific regulations. The Minister advised there will be further consultation before new regulations are taken to Cabinet.

- Training in Occupational Medicine - Dr. John Cowell informed council about this field and the training involved.

- Codes of Practice - George Bryce and Sandy Fedeyko explained that most so-called "Codes of Practice" are misnamed by legal definition even though occupational health and safety policy is to move toward industry codes.

- Isocyanates in Autobody Shops - Maurice Taylor explained the problems, surveys taken and information sent to employers.

- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS). Dr. Buchwald explained the background about providing information and labelling for hazardous substances and the steps approved at the Deputy Minister's meeting in May 1986 to achieve implementation of the program by 1989.

- Heritage Grant Program - at the September meeting, the Minister advised he is promoting research and asked council's advice regarding priorities of the program. Unfortunately, due to the Provincial budget restraint, Dr. Buchwald advised at the December meeting that only ongoing projects will be covered with no new funds allocated.

- Responsibility and Functions of Council - Andy Little and John Cowell prepared a report which was discussed and forwarded to the Minister.

- Budget for Council - budget prepared by Andy Little and John Cowell was discussed and forwarded to the Minister.

- Fitness to Work - John Cowell presented a report which stated doctors and nurses can determine fitness to work, but there are very few qualified occupational health doctors.

## VI CONFERENCES ATTENDED

A. Attendance Sponsored by the Occupational Health and Safety Division:

Occupational Health and Safety Division 1986 Annual Meeting held in Edmonton, Alberta

- Gus Bottas, John Cowell, Clint Dunford, Ron Jones, Maureen Shaw and Tom Whiting

Canada Safety Council Annual Conference held in Victoria, B.C.

- Andy Little, Gus Bottas and Tom Whiting

C.O.R.E. Convenience Store Crime Prevention Seminar held in Winnipeg, Manitoba

- Maureen Shaw and Clint Dunford

Dynamics of Social Change held in Edmonton, Alberta

- Phil Oakes and Clint Dunford

Workplace '86 held in Edmonton, Alberta

- Clint Dunford

Occupational Health Services in Canada Through The Year 2000 held in Calgary, Alberta

- Clint Dunford (participant) and Maureen Shaw (observer)

New Venture Development Group, University of Calgary, Alberta

- Maureen Shaw (gave a presentation)

B. Attendance Sponsored by Others:

Fitness Summit held in Ottawa, Ontario
- John Cowell

Medichem Conference held in Ludwigshaven, West Germany
- John Cowell (participant)

Film Laboratories Employees Occupational Health and Safety Conference held in Miami, Florida
- Gus Bottas (participant)

## VII MEMBERSHIP

As of January 1st, 1986 the members of the Occupational Health and Safety Council were:

| Represents | |
|---|---|
| Worker | Mr. Constantinos (Gus) Bottas |
| Employer | Dr. John Cowell |
| Employer | Mr. Clint Dunford |
| Employer | Mr. Archie Ewaskiw |
| Employer | Mr. Ron Jones |
| Worker | Mr. Horst Kiehm (inactive) |
| Worker | Mr. Sam Lee |
| Public | Mr. Andrew Little - **Chairman** |
| Worker | Mr. Phil Oakes |
| Public | Mr. Ron Moore MLA (until election) |
| Public | Mrs. Maureen Shaw |
| Public | Mr. Tom Whiting |

At the December meeting, Andrew Little was recognized by the Minister, the Occupational Health and Safety Division and members of council for the tremendous job he had done during his term as Chairman of the Occupational Health and Safety Council from December 1982 to December 1986. Maureen Shaw was appointed as the new Council Chairman in December 1986.

From January 1987 the Council's membership is as follows:

| Represents | |
|---|---|
| Worker | Mr. Constantinos (Gus) Bottas |
| Employer | Dr. John Cowell |
| Employer | Mr. Clayton Delbridge |
| Employer | Mr. Clint Dunford |
| Employer | Mr. Ron Jones - **Vice-Chairman** |
| Worker | Mr. Horst Kiehm (inactive) |
| Worker | Mr. Sam Lee |
| Worker | Mr. Phil Oakes |
| Public | Mrs. Maureen Shaw - **Chairman** |
| Public | Mr. Tom Whiting |

At present there are two vacancies which will represent the public sector.

The Chairman and members of the Occupational Health and Safety Council would like to express their thanks to Dr. Herb Buchwald, Managing Director of Occupational Health and Safety Division as well as staff of the division for their help during the year.